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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**NEWS FROM PEACEMAKING PROGRAM: PLAN OF OPERATIONS APPROVED,  
CERTAIN PEACEMAKER FEES MAY NOW BE PAID OUT OF GRANT**

On July 30, 2012, the Law & Order Committee of the Navajo Nation Council unanimously approved the Peacemaking Program's plan of operations that sets forth the Program's new traditional services, which are extensive.

The Peacemaking Program plan of operation clarifies the roles of the program and the courts and incorporates new enacted laws such as the *Alchíní bi Beehaz'áanii* and the Vulnerable Adult Protection Act.

The provisions of the new Plan of Operations reverse several decades in which peacemaking has fundamentally changed as a result of efforts to institutionalize peacemaking. The Program will now strive to fully develop peacemaking in *Diné* communities.

The new plan reinforces the independence of the peacemakers, clarifies the goal of peacemaking and reiterates the need for the traditional components to be distinct and separate from court-style processes. It replaces the Peacemaking Guidelines established in 2004.

Also this week, the Judicial Branch was notified that the Peacemaking Program has been awarded \$73,497 from the U.S. Department of Justice Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant for the "Juvenile Dependency, Diversion and Alternative Sentencing Peacemaking Project." This means that peacemaker fees for services addressing family preservation and juvenile accountability can be paid for indigent individuals and families so long as funds are available.

The award will fund peacemaker fees for the Program's extended range of services that include *hózhóji naat'aah* (traditional peacemaking), *álchíní báNdazhnit'á* (Diné family group conferencing), and life value engagements in which peacemakers sit with individuals or groups to help them confront problems and reach *hozho* with clarity and permanence.

The recent developments make it possible for the Program to finally fulfill its mandate under 7 N.N.C. 409-413, which include conforming procedures of *Hózhóji Naat'aanii* to traditional concepts; to support peacemakers in the community, and to provide education on Diné culture traditions.

The Program will be working hard to publicize the new services and the availability of grant funding for peacemaker fees.

The new plan of operation is available on the [www.navajocourts.org](http://www.navajocourts.org) website under the “Peacemaking Program” link.

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